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**CLAIMS**

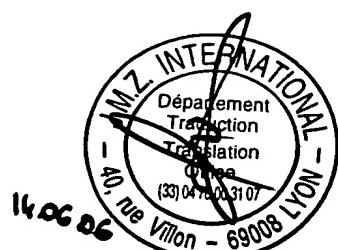
1 - Postero-lateral intervertebral disc prosthesis comprising an element (3) mounted with an orientation and self-centering capability between two inserts (1) and (2) disposed between the vertebral plateaux of two successive vertebral bodies, wherein:

- the insert (1) has a planar section fixed on the lower vertebral plateau;
- the element (3) has a lower planar surface for support, with a limited capacity for translational displacement on the insert (1), and an upper surface with a generally hemispherical form;
- the insert (2) has a planar section fixed on the upper vertebral plateau and opposite thereto, a concave surface for cooperating with the hemispherical surface of the element (3), with the possibility of multi-directional articulation;
- the inserts (1) and (2) and the insert (3) are in the form of a disc with a diameter of less than about 30 mm and, when juxtaposed, define a total height of about 11 to 15 mm to permit introduction by a postero-lateral approach route

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2 - Prosthesis according to claim 1, wherein the element (3) constitutes a core of a generally hemispherical shape capable of cooperating with the recess (2a) having a concave shape that complements the insert (2), said core (3) having a positioning stud (3d) that cooperates with a recess (1b) of the other insert (1) in order to permit axial rotation.

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3 - Prosthesis according to claim 1, wherein the positioning fittings of the core (3) are constituted by coupling means (3c) which





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cooperate with complementary means (1a) of the insert (1) to provide a fixed connection.

4 - Prosthesis according to claim 1, wherein the positioning  
5 fittings of the core (3) are constituted by coupling means which cooperate  
with complementary means of the insert to provide a mobile connection,  
with a capacity for limited translational displacement

10 5 - Prosthesis according to claim 3, wherein the coupling means  
capable of providing a fixed connection are constituted by complementary  
clipping means (3c) - (1a).

15 6 - Prosthesis according to claim 4, wherein the coupling means  
capable of providing a mobile connection are constituted by recesses and  
projections that act as a pivot pin (2b) - (4)..

7 - Prosthesis according to claim 1, wherein each of the inserts  
(1) and (2) has, over its thickness, fittings (E1) - (E2) to engage gripping  
and handling means.

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8 - Prosthesis according to claim 1, wherein the core (3) has, over  
its thickness, fittings (E3) to engage gripping and handling means

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9 - Autostatic retractor for fitting a prosthesis, according to any  
one of claims 1 to 8, wherein it is shaped so as not to injure the  
neurological elements.

